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### **Governor Baker, Cabinet Secretaries Host Roundtable To Highlight Urban Agenda**

**LAWRENCE** – Today Governor Charlie Baker, Housing and Economic Development Secretary Jay Ash, Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Ronald Walker II, and Education Secretary Jim Peyser attended a roundtable discussion in Lawrence focused on the Governor's Urban Agenda.

"Communities move forward when we enable them to solve local problems by leveraging local resources, not by relying on any one-size-fits-all program," **said Governor Baker**. "We look forward to seeing the results of the Urban Agenda in our communities."

The Urban Agenda is comprised of a series of policy goals around improving education, economic development, affordable housing, and public safety, including youth violence reduction and recidivism prevention. In promoting an Urban Agenda, the Baker-Polito administration looks to improve the quality of life for residents of Massachusetts cities.

"In encouraging cities and town to do more of what works locally, we look forward to seeing the best communities can offer for their residents," **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**. "Partnerships between the Commonwealth and municipalities are key to ensuring the wellbeing of all our residents."

"Working with municipalities to connect resources and expertise needed to implement targeted programs for targeted workforce development will result in healthier communities across the Commonwealth," **said Housing and Economic Development Secretary Jay Ash**. "The best leaders understand the needs of their communities, and are able to foster collaboration and partnerships to serve the community. The Urban Agenda will foster these kinds of leaders."

"The transformation of urban public education is central to the transformation of urban neighborhoods," **said Education Secretary Jim Peyser**. "Through the Workforce Skills Cabinet, we are connecting education, workforce development, and economic development initiatives so they have the greatest impact on urban communities."

"One of the things we are doing to help residents find jobs in the Commonwealth is to better connect our public workforce system, through our Career Centers, meet the demands of employers in each region," **Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development Ronald Walker said**. "We are flipping our model to focus on employers'

needs in order to help them fill job positions they are creating, which in turn will help companies grow and benefit the state's economy."

The Fiscal Year 2016 budget Gov. Baker recently signed makes significant new investments in Massachusetts communities, including a \$2 million Urban Agenda economic development grant program. The economic development grants, administered by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, will fund innovative community partnerships that leverage local economic assets. The program will challenge neighborhoods across Massachusetts to form partnerships that leverage existing economic assets, target specific workforce populations, define their economic development and quality of life goals, and then deliver on those goals. As part of the Urban Agenda, the Workforce Skills Cabinet will work with communities to match the needs employers to those seeking employment or additional education training.

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